

Joint Budget Review  
Saturday 2/13/21  
Meeting ID: 84419015981

Present: Tom Black, Elliot Bruce, Peter Campbell, Ken Estabrook (Chair), Alannah Gustavson, Kelly Kane, Jillian Prendergast (Vice Chair)

Absent: None

Others: Greg Johnson, Mike Guzzo, Justin Demarco, Chief Stowers, Brian Haas, Jennifer Gaudet, Colleen Andrade, Members of the Selectboard, Members of the School Committee, concerned citizens

Meeting Opened at 9:03am.

Justine read the legal notice for a remote meeting.

#### Kate Hogan Presentation

The Governor's Budget has been presented. Covid relief package using federal and state resources, with focus on schools and small business. Vaccine rollout is currently the focus in the House. She is supporting fully funding the student opportunity act, and some Ch. 70 increases, plus some Federal packages pending.

David asked when we might know about the student opp act monies, Rep Hogan stated that every student will receive at least what they have in the past, and there should be some more charter school reimbursement. David asked if the schools have the student opp act monies in their budget and Brian Haas said no because it was out of the budget last year and it is still an unknown.

#### Greg Johnson Presentation

Greg shared his budget presentation on screen. This presentation is available on Board Docs and can be read there.

Greg went over the budget process and timeline. He shared slides showing our revenue sources and the breakdown of our levy. He then went over the State Aid breakdown and highlighted the charter school assessment reimbursement drop.

Fire department's request for a Deputy Chief is not in this budget. Greg recommended to add this position when possible.

Part time custodian in DPW is recommended, but not in the budget.

Greg also recommends MS4 stormwater maintenance, snow and ice, and tree maintenance getting budgeted for more proactively. Currently we underfund snow and ice and use Free Cash. This is generally not good budgeting practice.

#### Cares funding status

Greg shared the presentation on Board Docs.

Chief Stowers spoke about the CARES Act and FEMA monies to the town. The Chief mentioned FEMA has been challenging to work with in terms of clarity of fund usage. Not all reimbursable items from FEMA relate to Maynard (example, field hospitals). CARES Act was

extended until 12/21 but as of yet, no more money has been allotted. We are still working with our original 940k. The Chief reiterated that CARES money is only for non-budgeted COVID expenses, not for budget supplementation. The Chief believes we are well stocked on PPE and that will not be an ongoing expense.

#### School Committee Presentation

Lydia handed the presentation over Brian Haas, as this budget is the Superintendent Budget until the SC votes to accept it.

Colleen Andrade shared the presentation on the screen, available on Board Docs.

The committees did not have questions post presentation.

#### Capital Improvement Plan

Jon Canchola shared the presentation. The CIP is a new group that started their work in the Fall. Jon Larkin built a capital planning model for projecting future spending. Emphasis on prioritization. Currently, we are in a very reactionary and “dire need” process.

Justin Demarco clarified that the Water Sewer rates for this year are not going to cover the 1.5million in the presentation. They are only covering the truck. This is a change the CapCom was not yet aware of.

Justine called a 10 minute break.

#### Ken Presentation

Ken shared the FinCom Perspectives slides on screen.

He emphasized our newer committees/subcommittees and channels of communication to make the budget process smoother and more transparent.

Sharing slide from last year with the D2 assumption to reiterate that future trends are concerning and pointing toward a potential need for a Prop 2 ½ operational override.

#### Selectboard Perspectives and Open Discussion

Justine offered thanks and appreciation for Town staff and boards and committees for their work. She is looking forward to the development of the Powdermill corridor, and marijuana revenue. She then opened it to the other board members. David Gavin added that he also believes Powdermill corridor is an important opportunity to focus on and is hoping for a development plan moving forward. He then asked Brian Haas how the Senior Project is a revenue generator (as the slide suggested). Brian clarified that it isn't actually revenue generating at the moment. Jennifer Gaudet clarified there are some grant resources available for the program. David also asked about the Reserve Fund and how well we are managing with that resource. Alannah shared the FY20 balance.

Armand offered thanks to all the volunteers on committees and spoke about planning more long-term. Jeff added that there are some frustrations in the Budget Subcommittee, and that this year is not a time to ask for an override that it is something to keep in mind for the future. He was glad to see all of our Capital needs laid out today. He is concerned about the gap in perception for the average town meeting voter on how monies are spent effectively. He thinks we need to be better at getting the improvements we have done out into public knowledge. He

asked if perhaps when considering overrides, should we do several smaller ones over a series of years, or a larger one, and asked Fincom to consider this possibility moving forward. He also mentioned advocating our state for more local aid.

Ken reiterated that the override process isn't just about whether it passes, but the conversations that go into whether or not we pose an override.

Chris asked how often overrides can be done and if there is a limit. Mike Guzzo answered that there is not a limit of frequency.

Ken asked the Fincom if they had comments.

Jillian spoke to our covid numbers. Kelly is hoping that the group here today can meet more than once a year to further communication and prioritization.

Ken is hoping we can take the Powdermill corridor study and also do it for our downtown area; Mill and Main may be included in that as well.

The School Committee offered last comments.

Lydia clarified that the student opportunities act funds can only be spent on certain things, it doesn't go into the general operating budget. Jennifer Gaudet spoke to the Student Opportunity Plan that has been made.

Mary reiterated the importance of keeping students in the district and needing funding to do that. Natasha is hoping on better transparency and reporting, and perhaps even spending some money for a financial review.

Motion to adjourn, vote 6-0 at 12:09pm.